of assignees' misdeeds or shortcomings in connection with estates. None of the difficulties or abuses of the discharge system need be regarded at all in framing a new law or the liquidation of insolvent estates. In that part of the old law which dealt with the process of liquidation while we freely admit that it might have been improved, there was much that was admirable. No wise man would think of passing a new law without drawing what assistance may be possible from the old. Not only so but in questions of doubt the preference should be given to the tried rather than the untried provision.

It follows from this that in matters of procedure the old act should be made the starting point. Its provisions, so far as applicable to the altered state of things and so far as they have commended themselves to the judgment of the public should be re-enacted. When changes are made they should be those that have been suggested by the experience of the past.

The suggestion made by Mr. Evans that voluntary assignments should again be permitted will scarcely meet with general favor The Act of 1869 allowed no such assignments. The Act of 1875 did away with them and under its provisions the law could be set in motion by a creditor only. We feel safe in asserting that under the administration of the latter Act no inconvenience was found in the absence of the power on the part of debtors to invoke of their own motion the assistance of that law. This fact coupled with the other which cannot be denied, that the law permitted voluntary assignment was open, as experience showed, to grave abuses should be sufficient to condemn the proposal for their revival. It would probably be difficult to improve upon the Act of 1875 as to the circumstances under which a creditor was allowed to place an estate in liquidation. Practically the same provisions ought to be again put in force. The only altera ion that appears necessary is such a modification in favor of debtors as may be considered just in view of the fact that under the new law they will have no opportunity of getting their estates back into their own hands.

As to liens the provision made by the late Act in favor of employees was reasonably just and fair. As to rent liens which our correspondent suggests should not in any case be allowed to exceed one year, we have long been of opinion that the arrears of rent allowed to be paid in full out of an insolvent estate should be lessened instead of increased No more than three months arrears of rent should be paid in full out of the estate. Landlords have long been exceptionally favored by the law but there is no reason why they should not be placed as nearly as possible on the same footing as other creditors. Indeed we think it worth serious consideration whether a landlord should in any case be allowed to do more than rank as any other creditor for any amount due him.

There does not appear to be any reason in the nature of things why a landlord who has trusted a man for the rent of a shop, should in case of that man's failure in business be entitled to collect his rent in full at the expense if those who have trusted the same man with goods for the same business. The exceptional rights allowed to landlords are the relics of a feudal age and must in time be nearly if not altogether swept away. There is no reason why a law for distribution should not take a step on this subject in the modern direction inste d of a retrograde one.

As to the subject of future rent we have never been able to understand why the provision of the English Act allowing the trustee the option of continuing the tenancy or abandoning it should not be introduced. Sometimes a lease may be a valuable asset and frequently it has been made valuable at the expense of the creditors. This occurs when the debtor out of the money realized from the sale of the creditor's goods made valuable improvements in fitting and furnishing the pr. mises. Under these circumstances there should be a means whereby the creditors may reap whatever advantage might accrue from the sale of the lease.

This law to be effectual should be made to override any provision in the lease itself. The only point to be guarded would be the supplying a landlord with a satisfactory tenant. That done he would have no reason to complain even if the creditors were fortunate enough to secure a good price for the balance of the leasehold term. On the other hand there should be no liability on the part of a Trustee or Liquidator for any future rent except during the time that he continued in occupation of the premises. All this is in a measure at least secured by the English Bankruptcy laws. There is no reason why the same result should not be brought about by a similar provision here.

Much could be said in favor of having the distribution of the proceeds of an estate made through the official Registrar. Doing so would not interfere with the liquidation of the estate. The proof of claims and the adjudication of them could all be carried on though the registrar's office and the Liquidator need be charged only with the realization of the assets of the estate. Having done so he might be called upon to return the whole of the proceeds with an account of his dealing with the estate to the Registrar through whom distribution might take place. This would relieve Liquidators entirely of questions affecting the contesting of disputed claims and the settlement of questions of preferences, liens, and such matters.

We cannot by these articles lay claim any more than our correspondent to have solved this "knotty problem." Should our comments serve to give a practical turn to the discussions upon the subject and thus hasten the ripening into law of public sentiment on the question, our purpose will have been served. The subject is one requiring the best consideration of our legislators ; when a new law is to be passed its framing should not be left to some ambitious M. P. who may have had little or no experience of the practical working of former enactments. The assistance of the best ability from each of the Provinces should be sought in framing the law that is needed. The fact that it must be made applicable to the whole Dominion, coupled with the other that it should as far as possible harmonize with existing laws in the different Provinces, shows how essential it is that the best talent from each should be consulted in its framing.

It was always felt in this Province that much of the difficulty experienced in the administration of the Act of 1872 in our Courts arose from the fact that its framers were more conversant with the laws of Quebec than with those of this Province, and so failed to make some of its provisions applicable to the prior existing state of things here. Similar difficulties were we believe experienced in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Such a mistake should be avoided in the preparation of a new measure.

THE COALS OF THE BOW AND BELLY RIVER DISTRICT.

The geological survey of Canada extended its investigation north of the forty-ninth parallel during the summer of 1881 as far west as the base of the Rocky Mountains. The area investigated during th . workable portion of that year covers roughly some 20,000 square miles, and extends two degrees north from the International Boundary line, and west from the 111th meridian to the foot hills of the Rocky Mountains.

With reference to the geological formatians of this part of the country, Doctor George M. Dawson regards the foot hills above-mentioned as the disturbed and overturned folds of the Cretaceous strata which occupy the whole of the territory investigated to the east and are there perfectly horizontal. These last mentioned strata slope to the east, and are made up of a series of formations which dip generally in a westward direction, so that the exposures are met with while travelling eastward. Travelling in the direction from the base of the mountains, we meet with the Laramie group of rocks which has been provisionally subdivided into four series ; the first of which is the Porcupine Hills, lying in the centre of the Willow Creek series, both of which are limited in area and contain neither coals nor lignites. Underlying these and outcropping further east are the St. Mary River series of rocks, which cover a large portion of the region under description. They contain no coal, but in the underlying series, the one at the base of the Laramie group, is a persistent lignite or coal bearing formation a few miles north of the forty-ninth parallel on the St. Mary river, which deposit was described by Doctor Dawson in his report on the Geology and Resources of that parallel as being eighteen inches in thickness, and occurring just at the level of the water in the river by which it is partly covered. The mineral breaks with a clear fracture into cuboidal fragments with bright faces, and is indistinguishable in appearance from many coals of the true Carboniferous formation. The Fox Hill beds, or their representatives in this district, appear to pass into the base of the Laramie upward and below to blend with the Pierre. The Pierre group throughout this district is not so homogeneous in character as further east, and frequently holds sandstone intecalations, but is as a whole the best marked and most easily recognized formation of this region. The most consistent coal bearing horizon is included in its base, and the fuel has already been utilized in supplying fort McLeod and for shipment to Benton on the Missouri by the waggons